

The Honorable Benjamin H. Settle

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT TACOMA

STEAKHOUSE SEATTLE, LLC et al.,

Plaintiff,

v.

UNITED STATES,

Defendant.

CASE NO. 3:18-CV-05751-BHS

**STIPULATED  
PROTECTIVE ORDER**

1. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this agreement is consistent with LCR 26(c). It does not confer blanket protection on all disclosures or responses to discovery, the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential

1 treatment under the applicable legal principles, and it does not presumptively entitle parties to file  
2 confidential information under seal.

3 2. “CONFIDENTIAL” MATERIAL

4 “Confidential” material shall include the following documents and tangible things  
5 produced or otherwise exchanged, or any other material that a party believes in good faith contains  
6 legally protectable information in accordance with Rule 26(c) of the Federal Rules of Civil  
7 Procedure:

- 8 • Applicable Portions of the Administrative Record Containing Information Exempt  
9 From Disclosure Under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008;
- 10 • Governmental Records Containing Information Exempt From Disclosure Under the  
11 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008;
- 12 • Applicable portions of records prepared in relation to the USDA Investigation of  
13 Plaintiff Containing Information Exempt From Disclosure Under the Food and  
14 Nutrition Act of 2008;
- 15 • The identity of the Undercover Investigator at issue in this action;
- 16 • Portions of Deposition Transcripts Contains Containing Information Exempt From  
17 Disclosure Under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008;
- 18 • Plaintiffs’ Tax Records; and
- 19 • Any Financial information not publicly filed with any federal or state regulatory  
20 authority.

21 3. SCOPE

22 The protections conferred by this agreement cover not only confidential material (as  
23 defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted from confidential material; (2) all  
24 copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of confidential material; and (3) any testimony,  
25 conversations, or presentations by parties or their counsel that might reveal confidential material.  
26

1 However, the protections conferred by this agreement do not cover information that is in  
2 the public domain or becomes part of the public domain through trial or otherwise.

3 4. ACCESS TO AND USE OF CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

4 4.1 Basic Principles. A receiving party may use confidential material that is disclosed  
5 or produced by another party or by a non-party in connection with this case only for prosecuting,  
6 defending, or attempting to settle this litigation. Confidential material may be disclosed only to the  
7 categories of persons and under the conditions described in this agreement. Confidential material  
8 must be stored and maintained by a receiving party at a location and in a secure manner that ensures  
9 that access is limited to the persons authorized under this agreement.

10 4.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless otherwise ordered  
11 by the court or permitted in writing by the designating party, a receiving party may disclose any  
12 confidential material only to:

13 (a) the receiving party's counsel of record in this action, as well as employees  
14 of counsel to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this litigation;

15 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including in house counsel) of the  
16 receiving party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation, unless the parties  
17 agree that a particular document or material produced is for Attorney's Eyes Only and is so  
18 designated thereby making it available only to the receiving party's counsel of record in this action;

19 (c) experts and consultants to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this  
20 litigation and who have signed the "Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound" (Exhibit A);

21 (d) the court, court personnel, and court reporters and their staff;

22 (e) copy or imaging services retained by counsel to assist in the duplication of  
23 confidential material, provided that counsel for the party retaining the copy or imaging service  
24 instructs the service not to disclose any confidential material to third parties and to immediately  
25 return all originals and copies of any confidential material;

1 (f) during their depositions, witnesses in the action to whom disclosure is  
2 reasonably necessary and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound”  
3 (Exhibit A), unless otherwise agreed by the designating party or ordered by the court. Pages of  
4 transcribed deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal confidential material must  
5 be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted  
6 under this agreement;

7 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a  
8 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information.

9 4.3 Filing Confidential Material. Before filing confidential material or discussing or  
10 referencing such material in court filings, the filing party shall confer with the designating party,  
11 in accordance with Local Civil Rule 5(g)(3)(A), to determine whether the designating party will  
12 remove the confidential designation, whether the document can be redacted, or whether a motion  
13 to seal or stipulation and proposed order is warranted. During the meet and confer process, the  
14 designating party must identify the basis for sealing the specific confidential information at issue,  
15 and the filing party shall include this basis in its motion to seal, along with any objection to sealing  
16 the information at issue. Local Civil Rule 5(g) sets forth the procedures that must be followed and  
17 the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to file material  
18 under seal. A party who seeks to maintain the confidentiality of its information must satisfy the  
19 requirements of Local Civil Rule 5(g)(3)(B), even if it is not the party filing the motion to seal.  
20 Failure to satisfy this requirement will result in the motion to seal being denied, in accordance with  
21 the strong presumption of public access to the Court’s files.

22 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

23 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection. Each party  
24 or non-party that designates information or items for protection under this agreement must take  
25 care to limit any such designation to specific material that qualifies under the appropriate  
26 standards. The designating party must designate for protection only those parts of material,

1 documents, items, or oral or written communications that qualify, so that other portions of the  
2 material, documents, items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept  
3 unjustifiably within the ambit of this agreement.

4 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations that are  
5 shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper purpose (*e.g.*, to  
6 unnecessarily encumber or delay the case development process or to impose unnecessary expenses  
7 and burdens on other parties) expose the designating party to sanctions.

8 If it comes to a designating party's attention that information or items that it designated for  
9 protection do not qualify for protection, the designating party must promptly notify all other parties  
10 that it is withdrawing the mistaken designation.

11 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in this  
12 agreement (see, *e.g.*, second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise stipulated or  
13 ordered, disclosure or discovery material that qualifies for protection under this agreement must  
14 be clearly so designated before or when the material is disclosed or produced.

15 (a) Information in documentary form: (*e.g.*, paper or electronic documents and  
16 deposition exhibits, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial proceedings),  
17 the designating party must affix the word "CONFIDENTIAL" to each page that contains  
18 confidential material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection,  
19 the producing party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (*e.g.*, by making appropriate  
20 markings in the margins).

21 (b) Testimony given in deposition or in other pretrial proceedings: the parties  
22 and any participating non-parties must identify on the record, during the deposition or other pretrial  
23 proceeding, all protected testimony, without prejudice to their right to so designate other testimony  
24 after reviewing the transcript. Any party or non-party may, within fifteen days after receiving the  
25 transcript of the deposition or other pretrial proceeding, designate portions of the transcript, or  
26

exhibits thereto, as confidential. If a party or non-party desires to protect confidential information at trial, the issue should be addressed during the pre-trial conference.

(c) Other tangible items: the producing party must affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information or item is stored the word "CONFIDENTIAL." If only a portion or portions of the information or item warrant protection, the producing party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected portion(s).

5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the designating party's right to secure protection under this agreement for such material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the receiving party must make reasonable efforts to ensure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this agreement.

## 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any party or non-party may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time. Unless a prompt challenge to a designating party's confidentiality designation is necessary to avoid foreseeable, substantial unfairness, unnecessary economic burdens, or a significant disruption or delay of the litigation, a party does not waive its right to challenge a confidentiality designation by electing not to mount a challenge promptly after the original designation is disclosed.

6.2 Meet and Confer. The parties must make every attempt to resolve any dispute regarding confidential designations without court involvement. Any motion regarding confidential designations or for a protective order must include a certification, in the motion or in a declaration or affidavit, that the movant has engaged in a good faith meet and confer conference with other affected parties in an effort to resolve the dispute without court action. The certification must list the date, manner, and participants to the conference. A good faith effort to confer requires a face-to-face meeting or a telephone conference.

6.3 Judicial Intervention. If the parties cannot resolve a challenge without court intervention, the designating party may file and serve a motion to retain confidentiality under Local Civil Rule 7 (and in compliance with Local Civil Rule 5(g), if applicable). The burden of persuasion in any such motion shall be on the designating party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose (*e.g.*, to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the challenging party to sanctions. All parties shall continue to maintain the material in question as confidential until the court rules on the challenge.

7. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION

If a party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL,” that party must:

(a) promptly notify the designating party in writing and include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

(b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this agreement. Such notification shall include a copy of this agreement; and

(c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the designating party whose confidential material may be affected.

8. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

If a receiving party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed confidential material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this agreement, the receiving party must immediately (a) notify in writing the designating party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the protected material, (c) inform the person or persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this agreement, and (d) request that such person or persons execute the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

1 9. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE PROTECTED  
2 MATERIAL

3 When a producing party gives notice to receiving parties that certain inadvertently  
4 produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the obligations of the  
5 receiving parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision  
6 is not intended to modify whatever procedure may be established in an e-discovery order or  
7 agreement that provides for production without prior privilege review. The parties agree to the  
8 entry of a non-waiver order under Fed. R. Evid. 502(d) as set forth herein.

9 10. NON TERMINATION AND RETURN OF DOCUMENTS

10 Within 60 days after the termination of this action, including all appeals, each receiving  
11 party must either return all confidential material to the producing party, including all copies,  
12 extracts and summaries thereof or shall, upon the election of the receiving party, shall shred all  
13 such materials.

14 Notwithstanding this provision, counsel are entitled to retain one archival copy of all  
15 documents filed with the court, trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts, correspondence,  
16 deposition and trial exhibits, expert reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work  
17 product, even if such materials contain confidential material.

18  
19 11. EFFECT ON DISCOVERY

20 This Stipulated Protective Order shall not enlarge or affect the proper scope of discovery  
21 in this action, nor shall this Stipulated Protective Order imply that discovery material designated  
22 as Confidential under the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order is properly discoverable,  
23 relevant or admissible in this Action or in any other litigation. Nothing in this Stipulated Protective  
24 Order shall be interpreted to require disclosure of materials which a party contends are protected  
25 from disclosure by the attorney-client privilege, attorney work product doctrine, or any other  
26 applicable privilege.



1 The confidentiality obligations imposed by this agreement shall remain in effect until a  
2 designating party agrees otherwise in writing or a court orders otherwise.

3  
4 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

5 DATED: January 30, 2019

/s Virginia R. Nicholson, Esq.  
Virginia R. Nicholson, Esq.

6  
7 DATED: January 30, 2019

/s Stewart D. Fried, Esq.  
Stewart D. Fried, Esq.  
Attorneys for Plaintiffs

8  
9  
10 DATED: January 30, 2019

/s Kristen R. Vogel, Esq.  
Kristen R. Vogel, Esq.  
Attorney for Defendant

11  
12 PURSUANT TO STIPULATION, IT IS SO ORDERED

13 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that pursuant to Fed. R. Evid. 502(d), the production of any  
14 documents in this proceeding shall not, for the purposes of this proceeding or any other federal or  
15 state proceeding, constitute a waiver by the producing party of any privilege applicable to those  
16 documents, including the attorney-client privilege, attorney work-product protection, or any other  
17 privilege or protection recognized by law.

18  
19 Dated this 31<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2019.

20  
21  
22 

23 BENJAMIN H. SETTLE  
United States District Judge

EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print or type full name], of  
\_\_\_\_\_ [print or type full address], declare under penalty of  
perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was  
issued by the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington on [date] in the  
case of \_\_\_\_\_ **[insert formal name of the case and the number and initials  
assigned to it by the court]**. I agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of this  
Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could  
expose me to sanctions and punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will  
not disclose in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective  
Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the  
Western District of Washington for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Stipulated Protective  
Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after termination of this action.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

City and State where sworn and signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_